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CSD *News Release*

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GENDER-BASED PRICING IS ILLEGAL; CSD REMINDS BUSINESSES AND CONSUMERS

As we approach the peak of the holiday shopping season, the Miami-Dade County Consumer Services Department (CSD) is reminding consumers and business people that County law prohibits businesses from charging different prices for goods or services based solely on the customer's gender.

"At the same time, it must be noted that not all price differences are illegal," says Mario Goderich, Director of CSD's Consumer Protection Division. "A business is permitted to charge a different price if producing the commodity or service costs more, involves more time, or is more difficult," he points out.

"Consumers who think they have been the victims of gender price discrimination may have grounds to file a complaint," Goderich says.

As with any consumer problem, consumers are encouraged to first try to resolve the dispute directly with the business. However, if a consumer cannot resolve the problem, or the business' explanation is not satisfactory, they should call the Miami-Dade Consumer Hotline for assistance at (305) 375-3677.

An enforcement officer knowledgeable about the law will assess the situation and the consumer may be asked to file a formal written complaint for investigation and mediation. If it is

determined that the law has been violated, the business may be subject to fines and other enforcement action.

Fines for violation of Miami-Dade County's gender pricing discrimination law range from \$200 to \$500.

Goderich reminds consumers and businesses that gender price discrimination is illegal throughout the year, not just during the holidays.

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The Miami Dade Consumer Services Department is an agency of Miami-Dade County government that protects consumers through complaint mediation, business regulation, and consumer education. The Department operates the Consumer Hotline (305) 375-3677, a central telephone number for consumer complaints and information.